

opportunity of consulting the people about it.

While the government ownership of railways may be all right in itself, I am not at all in favour of it. I believe that the success of any enterprise is more assured in the hands of private individuals than in the hands of the Government. We have the example of the Canadian Pacific Railway itself. It is not a government-owned railway. I cannot talk from experience very much about this railway but a number of speakers in this House have claimed that it is the greatest success among enterprises of its kind to be found anywhere in the world. If that road has been such a great success and such a great agency in the development of this country under private ownership, if it is getting along and paying back everything that it has a right to pay back to the Government, and if it is paying its way splendidly as it goes along under private ownership, what is the matter with another road alongside of it and passing through much the same territory, if kept within proper limits, operated under private conditions and by proper management, making the same success as this great undertaking? The experience in this country is that you do not find enterprising and far-sighted railway men conducting railways under public ownership. Apparently the reason is that personal advancement, as a result of ingenuity and enterprise, is not so rapid or assured on a government-owned railway as it is on a railway which is privately owned. Anybody who has managed a railway will agree with me that if a railway is looking for a first-class live manager it will go to a privately owned road where personality and individuality in the management are encouraged. One of the great drawbacks in connection with the government-owned railway is that men who are hired by the Government simply become a part of the machinery and move along at the slow pace that that machinery demands. Be that as it may, I want to point out that if we were going to take this road over we should have done it under the conditions and arrangements that were made in 1914. Then we had the assurance of the Prime Minister, the Minister of Finance and the Solicitor General that everything was in readiness to take the road over if default should be made. I want to impress upon these gentlemen who have put their words on record and given us that assurance that the people expect them to carry out their promise. They were acting

for the people of this country and they have no right to change the conditions of the agreement of 1914 without consulting the people.

The Secretary of State, who was then in charge of this measure, said that everything that the Canadian Northern owned had been put in the hotchpotch, absolutely under the control of the Government. There it stood; out of that it could not go; if default occurred, we had the whole thing. We hold hon. gentlemen to that bargain; if they make a worse one, they are not keeping faith with the country.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Time.

Mr. McKENZIE: I am sorry that my time is up, for I have done nothing more than touch upon this great question.

Mr. GUTHRIE: I rise to give the conclusions which I have reached in regard to this important measure. I agree with the last portion of the remarks of my hon. friend (Mr. McKenzie) who has just spoken. I so voted on the amendment offered upon the second reading of this Bill by the member for South Renfrew (Mr. Graham). I thought that the legislation of 1914, particularly section 24, was binding upon me as a representative of a constituency in this Dominion. When the statute of 1914 was placed before the House it was made in very express terms, so express as to take away what might be the ordinary rights of mortgagors before the courts of law and equity of the land. That section provided that in the event of default the Government of Canada might take over the road, foreclosing absolutely all rights of the proprietors of the road, and of other persons if any, notwithstanding any statutory enactment or any rule of law or equity to the contrary. In view of that enactment, I felt it was my duty to vote for the amendment proposed to the motion for the second reading of the Bill. But this House saw fit in its wisdom to defeat that amendment, and I have now to decide, according to the best judgment that I can exercise on the matter, what disposition should in my opinion be made of the Canadian Northern railway, having regard only to the interests of the people.

I believe that the people, had they had an opportunity of expressing their opinion upon the question, would in very large majority support the proposal for government ownership of the Canadian Northern railway at the present time. I know that that is the feeling of the people in that part